

BRITISH
PHYSICIAN

1716



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THE
British PHYSICIAN:
TREATING

Of our *Diet*, and *Common Nourishment*, Of *Air*, Of *Medicines*, Of *Physical* and *Chyrurgical Writers*, &c.

According to the Old *English* Proverb,
Before Forty, we must either be Fools, or Physicians.

CICERO speaking of *Physick*, says,
Deorum immortalium consecrata est Ars Medica,
Tusculan. Quæst. lib. 3.

L O N D O N,

Printed for J. Morphew, near Stationers-Hall. 1716.

THE

British Physician

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OF our Diet, and Common Nourish-
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Physical and Constitutional History



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THE

British Physician:

To be continued Once a Fortnight.

Concerning our Diet, and common Nourishment, Air, and Medicines, of Physical and Chyrurgical Writers, and of Distempers and Diseases, &c. for the Use of all true Britons, who desire Health, hoping at the same time, that Reading the Virtues of Coffee, or other Liquors, in these Houses, or elsewhere; may sometimes not only prove as Amusing, but also fully as Instructive, as the continual Poring upon dull Politicks; or other less useful Studies.

WEDNESDAY, May 30. 1716.

WHAT Subject can be more desirable to Human Nature, than the most Antient, most Noble, and most Valuable Art of Physick? yet how this useful Study has (of late) been so much Undervalued and Neglected, by the Generality of Mankind, is undoubtedly a Thing very worthy of every ones Enquiry?

That there are however, a slothful, careless, indolent Sort of Animals, who scarce ever think of Health, or of the Cause or Cure of Distempers, till in Distress, is most certain; who, when well, do, like Horses, eat their Corn, and thereafter, like Hogs, go to rest, without e'er thinking further of the Matter; yet that the more allowable Indifference, or Want of Enquiry, in some Men of Sense of latter Years, does proceed from another Cause, is also as certain, viz. The many confused Scriblings, contradictory Wranglings.

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lings, and notional Disputes, which have happened amongst the Professors of this Art, commonly occasioned, either by a gross Ignorance, or byass'd by their private Interests; for tho' Physick (as well as Religion) has in all Ages been subject to endless Cavils, and Controversies, proceeding from one of these Causes; yet such numberless Contests have more particularly happen'd since the Time of the Great *Hippocrates*, than before, when they mostly relied on Observation. Thus then such confused Wranglings must necessarily have occasion'd the Ridicule and Derision of Men of Wit, who from thence rashly conclude the whole to be no other than a meer Heap of intricate Rubbish, or political Jargon; tho' to the great Loss of this Science, that it is not studied and improved as other Arts and Sciences are, by any but those who live by it.

It is nevertheless most certain, that whilst this Profession did as yet (like Truth) appear in its simple and homely Dress, and that Certainty was more known and sought after than private Interest, (as of late) it was then that Emperors, and the greatest sovereign Princes, applied themselves to this most useful Study; it was then also, that some of the Profession, as *Æsculapius*, *Hippocrates*, &c. were Deified, and had Sacrifices offer'd up to them when dead, being esteemed as Gods and Demy-Gods.

The *Athenians* were so sensible of the Services done them by *Hippocrates*, particularly in the Time of a Pestilential Distemper which reign'd amongst them, that they then presented him with a Crown of Gold of a thousand Pieces in Weight; at the same Time making him and his Family free of their City, and to be maintain'd at the publick Charge, with a Liberty to all the Youth of the Isle of *Cos*, his Native Country, to come and be educated with those of *Athens*; besides several other Honours conferred upon him, as being privy to their sacred Mysteries, &c. This Divine Old Man having at the same time refused the rich Offers of *Artaxerxes*, King of *Persia*, who desir'd him to come to him upon the like Occasion; at which this great Monarch was so incensed, that he forthwith threatned his Country with War and Destruction, if he was not deliver'd up; but his Country-men being sensible he had refused these rich Offers from a Love to his Country, did with great Resolution and Bravery, deny to deliver him to the enraged *Artaxerxes*.

Thus the mutual Love and Gratitude is very observable, which was not only betwixt *Hippocrates*, and those of his own Country, of the Isle of *Cos*, but likewise with all those of *Athens* and *Greece*.

Hippocrates is said to have been the first who particularly observed, and regulated

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regulated the Diet of the Sick, in so much that he performed many of his Cures by that Method alone, and in most Cases concluded he had done the principal Part, when he had ordered their Diet.

He advised humid and moist Things to the dry Constitution; and cold Things to the hot; Diminution and Abstinence in Superfluity and Plenitude; but still supplied and cherished Nature when wanting, &c. In a Word, his great Study was to help and assist Nature to overcome the Distempers which oppressed her.

The particular Observations which this Divine Old Man made upon the Diet, or Nourishment of Human Bodies, was no Doubt a Subject very worthy of so Great a Man; especially when we consider, that most of the Distempers incident to our Bodies have their Origine in the Stomach, or *Primæ viæ*; since probably they are far the inferior Number which do not take their Rise from this Source, or Spring; it being most certain, that Gluttony and Voluptuousness, destroy more People than the Army.

Thus then, that we may rightly consider the true Nature of Health, and the best Way and Means to keep the human Fabrick in its tranquil State, we must first suppose the Machine to be perfectly well, and every Part of the Body in particular to do its proper Office, as the Glands,

or Kernels of the Mouth and Throat, to secrete the *Saliva*, or to strain out that necessary and useful Juice called Spittle; which not only serves to moisten those delicate and nervous Parts, but is likewise a most fit and proper *Menstruum* for the better preparing, softening, and mollifying the Aliment, or Nourishment, in order to its right Concoction and Digestion when in the Stomach.

And when arrived there, the Glands of the inner Coat of the Stomach, must also spew out their good and perfect Juice, to lubricate this Membrane; where, together with the Motion of the Muscles of the Belly, and Ribs, the fleshy Fibres of the Stomach, and its natural Heat; the Aliment is by that Means so compressed and squeezed, by this continual Motion; being at the same Time so well imbibed by these proper Juices; and so very warmly digested in this Natural Balneo, that it is, at last, (when sufficiently prepared) forced out of the Stomach into the first Gut; where it as yet receives more perfect Attrition, by mixing there with the Bile, which is thrown into this Gut from the Gall Bladder; this serving to soften, blunt, or sheath, the Acidity of the Chyle; which also must be in its right State, as well as the Pancreatic Juice, or that strained from the Sweet-bread; this latter serving to dilute the Chyle, that it may the better pass thorough the

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the small lacteal Veins of the Mesentery, where, as well as in the Thoracic Duct, it must as yet receive a due Quantity of good Lymph, still more to dilute the Chyle, before it enters into the Blood.

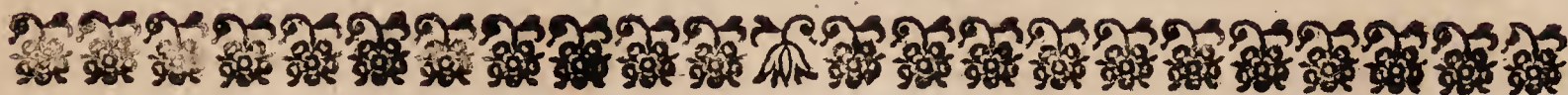
From hence we may easily observe how very necessary it is that all the Secretions, or every particular Juice of the whole Body, be in perfect State; for if we suppose it otherwise, and that any one of them be vitiated, as the Saliva, or Spittle. Juices of the Stomach, Bile, Pancreatic Juice, or Lymph, &c. there will consequently follow a Want of that

due Separation which is absolutely necessary to divide the most minute Parts of the Aliment, or Nourishment; so that some Part of 'em remaining more gross, and not rightly separated, are in that manner render'd incapable of freely passing thorough the smaller Channels; and from hence will follow Obstructions, Inflammations, Tumours, and Pains, in different Parts, (at the same Time occasioning more or less Fever) and all these will vary, according to the Defects of the different Secretions, Juices, or Fluids of the Body.

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THE

British Physician.

S E C T. II.

Of the Necessity, and Usefulness, of the Study and Knowledge of Physick, to all Sorts of People; the old Proverb being here made good, That before Forty, we must either be Fools, or Physicians.

HAVING in my First, already given some short, tho' otherwise but rude, and unpolish'd Hints, of the Necessity of this Human Machine being in perfect Health, and all the Fluids in their due and proper State; in order to turn the Aliment into good Nourishment: Yet before I enter upon the particular Choice, and the many different Qualities of Food, or any thing taken at the Mouth; it will probably be most necessary to observe, first, that every Man (who is not a Fool) ought to be very exact, in making particular Observations on his own Diet, and all the different Sorts of Nourishment which he takes; the various Alterations and Changes, which he finds they make in his Body; and

more especially to take notice of such things, as do any way disturb him, or do throw the Human Fabric into Distempers or Disorders; since such Knowledge is only, in some tolerable degree, to be arrived at, by every body in particular; and is therefore never to be found out (of all Mankind) by any one Person or Physician.

This we find so true, that there is nothing more common, than one sort of Food to agree with one Man, and yet the same Kind to disagree with another. Thus, for Example, Claret-wine proves Corroborative, and Astringent, or binding, to the generality of People; and yet many others are always griped and purged by it: And much in this manner also, of Cheese, Milk, Opium, &c.

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So likewise Coffee, Green Tea, Bohea, Chocolate, &c. one Sort agrees best with one Man, t'other with another, having quite different Operations, upon various Constitutions, or People.

It is also very observable, that some Men, by refraining from Sugar in their Coffee, have at last been freed of an old and long continuing Pain in the Stomach; and others again have found Benefit in their Eyes, by abstaining from Milk in their Tea; whereas both one and t'other may agree very well with others; tho' it is most certain, that in *Turkey*, and *Holland*, they do drink these Liquors in the true, natural, and most wholesome manner, which is simple and plain, without any Sugar, or other Mixture.

From hence then, the Use and Necessity of this particular Knowledge, must needs appear very plain and evident to every Man; which just Knowledge, will not only prove a very material and principal Branch, towards keeping the Body in most perfect Health: but likewise when sick, or distemper'd, the exactly insinuating these things to him who comes to cure the Sick, and by rightly stating the true and natural Constitution of the Infirm, it will prove so great a Help and Assistance towards his Relief, that I think we may freely say (at the same time agreeing with the Wise *Hippocrates*)

that the grand Part of the Cure of Distempers consists in this.

It will also be found more particularly necessary, when consider'd, how much that Patients or sick People are Sufferers, by some Physicians, who have scarce any Regard to the Difference of Constitutions, but treat all in the same manner: or do model their Patients Way of living, according to their own Temper, and Inclinations, still advising that as the most excellent, which they do find best to agree with their own Constitutions.

Thus those then, who do neglect this most useful Study, are in a great degree their own Murtherers; since it is an unknown Loss to the Physician who has the Care of them, in his not being rightly and fully inform'd in these Matters; and therefore such People do in a great Measure die by their own Folly, rather than by the Fault of their Physician.

When we justly reflect upon the Wisdom and Manners of the Antients, we cannot but easily see, how far (in this respect) they exceeded those of the present Age; since this Science was then thought worthy of being studied by the Wisest and Greatest of Men; such as *Solomon*, *Alexander the Great*, with *Aristotle* his Master, *Mithridates* King of *Pontus*, *Atalus* King of *Pergamo*, *Jesina* the 9th King of *Scotland*, *Marcus Antoninus*, with divers other Emperors, High-

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High-Priests, Princes, and Philosophers, [as *Pythagoras*, *Epidocles*, *Democritus*, *Heraclides*, *Cicero*, *Cato*, &c.] without particularly mentioning the divine Medicinal Prescriptions formally order'd in Holy Writ.

From which it plainly appears, by all these Great Men, how very necessary they thought the Study of Physick to every body in particular; for the better Preservation of Health, and their further Safety, Ease, Conveniency, and greatest Satisfaction of Human Life.

Such who are contrary to this Opinion, are very justly class'd, not only amongst the Foolish (which Folly they oft-times observe, when too late) but they even seem also, in this respect, to be some Degrees inferior to the common Brute Animals, since it is very remarkable, that these Creatures, by common Observation, and their own natural Sagacity, have immediate Recourse to those things, which do relieve them, when sick; as Herbs, Roots, Plants, &c. Thus the Rattle-snake has recourse to his Root, and the Dog to his Grass, when ill; the Goat to Hellebore, or such like Herb; and the Hawk, and other Birds, to Peeble Stones and Gravel, to cleanse their Maws; besides many other the like Accounts, which might be mention'd of other Creatures.

But it is probable, that some Men

will pretend, they have not sufficient Time to apply themselves to the thorough Study, and Knowledge of this Art; and therefore choose to leave it entirely to those, who make it their whole Profession and Business: yet from what we have already advanced, the great Inconveniences of this careless Indolence is very plain: For be it that they have not such a perfect, or exact Knowledge of the Virtues of all, or of most Medicines, and of Anatomy, Surgery, Chymistry, &c. yet surely they ought at least to study and know, the different Nature, and Qualities of that Aliment, or Nourishment, they daily receive at the Mouth; and justly to know all the various Effects these have upon their own Bodies in particular. And since we make such Bustle, and take so much Care, for the good Substistence of these our dear Machines, can any temporal Affairs then, or Study, be preferable to this Knowledge of recovering Health? or of preserving this Human Fabrick in its quiet and tranquil State?

The better to confirm the Usefulness and Necessity of all that I have urged, I shall add yet further, that Observation and Experience does not only teach the same; but it likewise seems absolutely necessary, from a right mechanical Consideration, of the Animal Structure; for when we do seriously reflect, not only upon the

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the visible various Forms of Human Creatures, or the different Modellations of these our Machines in general; but also that every Part in particular, even the most minute, does in some Degree or Proportion, differ from the like Part in any other Body; tho' not always so very perceptible to the naked Eye: Yet no Man, upon comparing two Stones, Bones, or Things, could ever find them to be exactly the same in all Respects. And this seems most highly indeed, to glorify the wonderful Works, of the Great and Wise Creator of all things; that every thing should in some degree vary from another, and that no two Things should be exactly the same; which if they had, could not have struck us with that wonderful Variety we so much admire, and search after; but even Things and Creatures likewise, would not have been so useful to one another.

Thus then, it is not that we have still to do with the same Machine, or Creature, gradually differing in their Sizes only, of Largeness and Smallness, but even the whole Animal Creature, with all its Parts in particular, are altogether different in their Proportions, from those of any

other Creature; so that Mathematically speaking, the Machines, or Bodies, are entirely different in Form, one from another, and therefore we have still to do with a new Subject; and consequently a new Distemper; tho' the Variation may not always appear so very evident, and that some approach nearer to one another than other some; all which is more particularly confirm'd by the various Operations of Medicines, and of Aliment, &c. upon different Subjects.

Since the Truth then of what we have hinted will scarce (I think) admit of being disputed by any; the Necessity and Use of studying this Knowledge (by every such Body in particular) must needs appear very plain to every one; since no Man can possibly arrive to the just and exact Knowledge of all Bodies, ever varying one from another; and therefore each Body in particular, ought to study the Nature of their own Constitution, and those who are not willing to be so much Physicians, must remain in their willful Ignorance, 'tis they will be the greatest Sufferers, and may perhaps see, and repent their heedless Folly, when too late.

